

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & CRS OVERVIEW

Cluster 1 Report

Executive Summary

The Process

The Community Reinvestment Strategy (CRS) was year long city-wide, community-based visioning and strategic planning process. The CRS process--a privately funded project of the City of Detroit Planning and Development Department-- was designed to identify the assets, strengths and reinvestment opportunities for Detroit communities with a focus on the next 5 to 10 years. Each Cluster conducted planning within six planning areas including, housing, neighborhood commercial, job centers, transportation, environment and youth development. Cluster 1 also identified two "special issues" for which included City Airport and the Michigan State Fair Grounds. The city was divided into 10 sectors or "Clusters", with Cluster 1 extending from Woodward on the west to Van Dyke on the east and south from Eight Mile Road to Highland Park, Hamtramck, and I-94.

The CRS process was comprised of three major phases: data collection, community visioning and reinvestment recommendations. The data collection phase involved gathering information on existing conditions, assets and opportunities within the Cluster. Building conditions surveys, focus groups, written surveys and other information were used to paint a portrait of existing conditions within the Cluster. The community visioning phase of the process is where residents, business owners and other stakeholders reviewed what was learned through the data collection phase and used this information to begin developing "visions" for Cluster 1. Finally, the third major phase of the process involved the development, review and approval of the reinvestment recommendations for the Cluster.

Community Participation

As previously stated, CRS was a community-based strategic planning and visioning process that utilized input from a cross-section of community stakeholders in each phase of the process. Each Cluster's planning process was governed by a 15 to 20 member Cluster Board which included residential, institutional, educational, religious, business and community organization representation. Cluster Boards also worked closely with technical assistance teams that brought professional planning expertise to the process.

During the data collection phase, community residents and other stakeholders were trained as data gatherers and conducted Cluster-wide surveys of housing and commercial building conditions. Cluster 1 also benefitted from work done by a team of youth planners who were also trained as data gatherers and who made a significant contribution to this phase of the process. Residents, business owners and others were also invited to attend focus groups on each of the planning areas, including a special youth development focus group for young people. Later, community visioning workshops

provided all stakeholders with an opportunity to participate in developing a “vision” for the future of the Cluster. Residents and others also attended a Community Review meeting to provide feedback on draft reinvestment recommendations--which was used to revise the recommendations and develop final reinvestment priorities.

Reinvestment Recommendations

Finally, information from the Community Visioning workshops was combined with additional input from Cluster Board sub-committees in each of the planning areas to develop draft Reinvestment Recommendations for Cluster 1. The recommendations reflect both physical and land use reinvestment priorities as well as policy or programmatic recommendations. These recommendations provide a blueprint for reinvestment in Cluster 1 over the next 10 years and, in some instances, also include more long-term priorities. Additionally, Cluster Board members and other stakeholders adopted a set of Guiding Principles which describe the Cluster’s overall approach to reinvestment. These Principles were developed out of a strong sense that reinvestment be consistent with and reflect the core values and interests of Cluster 1 stakeholders.

Following are the Guiding Principles and top *three* reinvestment priorities for each of the six planning areas (a complete listing of all reinvestment priorities is contained in the Reinvestment Recommendations section of this report):

Cluster 1 Guiding Principles for Reinvestment

1. Reinvestment in Cluster 1 should build upon the strengths of the Cluster, particularly its residents, by avoiding or minimizing the displacement of current residents to the greatest extent possible.
2. Cluster and City-wide issues which affect residents and stakeholders throughout Detroit, such as proposed Cluster developments, potential uses for the Michigan State Fair Grounds and proposed riverfront development, should involve the input of all Clusters.
3. Cluster 1 stakeholders should continue to convene periodically to monitor the progress toward reinvestment goals and ensure that proposed developments are in keeping with reinvestment priorities and principles.

Housing

1. Rehabilitate and preserve existing housing and develop infill housing where feasible throughout the Cluster.
2. Enhance the City's capacity to enforce compliance with the existing housing code through increased City resources and citizen participation, including the use of trained "deputized" residents.
3. Expand housing financing options in Cluster 1 and throughout the City to provide increased opportunities for financing housing cooperatives.

Neighborhood Commercial

1. Develop small neighborhood-based commercial developments throughout the Cluster so that small commercial centers are located within one mile of all neighborhoods.
2. Redevelop surplus commercial land to better serve the community. Surplus land should be used for:
 - ❖ Institutional facilities (training centers, multi-service centers)
 - ❖ Community gardens and "pocket parks" (small parks with few amenities)
 - ❖ Greenways and bike paths connecting neighborhoods to each other and to the Detroit River
3. Improve City services provided to commercial businesses, including trash removal and road maintenance.

Job Centers

1. Establish a job training center in the Cluster that provides certification and training in computer technology, skilled trades and construction, entrepreneurship and health care.
2. Promote the creation of new jobs, particularly in the following areas:
 - ❖ Retail/service businesses, including restaurants, retail stores and utility payment centers
 - ❖ Technology-based industries
 - ❖ Public administration (Secretary of State, City government)
3. Establish a Jobs Network that works with job training centers to identify and link residents with job openings in the Cluster.

Transportation

1. Improve the DDOT bus system by:
 - ❖ Purchasing smaller buses to allow for more frequent rush hour service
 - ❖ Installing well-lighted bus shelters
 - ❖ Hiring bus drivers that are courteous, knowledgeable and timely
2. Promote better coordination of services, or consider a merger between DDOT and SMART to offer more routes, increase frequency and reduce the number of transfers required to reach suburban job centers.
3. Sell bus tokens through retail stores for adult riders and discounted passes for students commuting to and from school on DDOT buses.

Environment

1. Test soils in areas identified as community gardens for lead and other contamination.
2. Aggressively remediate brownfields by establishing a Brownsfields Redevelopment Authority that has citizen representation on the oversight and site selection board.
3. Fund the development of greenways and community gardens and parks on surplus commercial land.

Youth Development

1. Establish a large-scale “regional” recreation/multi-purpose community center at Farwell Field with amenities such as a swimming pool, shower facilities, meeting space, tennis courts, sauna rooms and a library.
2. Fully utilize churches, recreation centers, public schools and libraries through extended hours and increased resources to deliver cultural, educational and other youth programs such as mentoring, tutoring, youth leadership, literacy, violence prevention and community service programs.
3. Expand job training and employment opportunities through the Detroit Public Schools and other sources to include cooperative work/school programs, internships, job placement programs and vocational training.

Special Issues

1. Do not expand City Airport and enhance safety, reduce noise and implement other quality of life improvements for area residents.